

Pro D assignment – Oct. 31,'17 - TRC report – Rick Guenther

(I did finish the required reading and video watching, except for the video on the Ottawa Closing Ceremony – I couldn't get it to run.)

This assignment has been a good in helping me understand more clearly what the TRC was all about. The TRC website is very impressive and I was amazed at the huge amount of material that is available to help people understand the impact that the residential school experience has had on not only the First Nations people, but also on all of us who call Canada home.

Honestly, I never really took a big interest in what the TRC had done, even though I have talked to many native people that have been affected by it.

The one video by Dr. Marie Wilson, 'How should people feel?', helped me to realize that the residential school experience has had, or it should have had, an effect on all of us. I would usually think, "Well, I wasn't there, I didn't do anything to them, not my fault." But as Dr. Wilson points out – we all are to abide by the laws and policies of this country. "...everything that is done to one or some, has a bearing on all of us..." We can or should feel mad and upset about what has happened to our native people. And if we do then what? It should move, or as she said "transform" us as a society, to help us all heal and work together for a better society and a better future.

I often talk to a First Nations man who has gone through the residential experience. It was a horrible time for him, one that continues to bother him and causes issues in just about everything that he does. I honestly don't know what to say to him, but going through this material has helped me to understand more clearly what he has gone through and what I can do to try help him and others who have gone through this.

The Calls to Action were also impressive and very comprehensive. It will be interesting to see how many of them actually get fulfilled. We were asked to see how we as an organization and individual staff should respond to Numbers 58-61. I definitely see the need for more education on my part. I need to spend more time on the TRC website, check out some of the videos, articles and other resource material. As a mission we need to make sure that all our staff is well educated in what has happened and then see how we can apply it to our

particular community that we work in. This assignment was a real learning experience for me and I hope it was to other staff to. All new staff should be required to do something similar to this assignment. It would also be good for us to inform our local and/or supporting churches to this material so they can be better informed on what has happened to the First Nations people of this country. And it may also help them to see what, if any, their particular church (or denomination) has had in this sad part of Canadian history.

Because of the residential school experience many First Nations people are turned off to the church or anyone associated with it. As we continue to minister to the native community, may God help us to clearly share the message of hope, forgiveness and reconciliation that Christ can bring.